

# Huntington School RPE Department

## The New Curriculum



### Intent

**Ambitious curriculum end-goal:** students will build up accurate knowledge about the complexity and diversity of global religion and worldviews.

**SACRE:** Engage people's systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religions and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as to develop responses of their own.

#### Students will be able to...

**Know more:** accurate, diverse, technical and nuanced understanding of wide variety of religious and non-religious worldviews.

**Remember more:** regular formative and summative assessment. Opportunities for students to apply knowledge, building their long-term memory.

**Do more:** confidently interpreting texts, symbols, behaviours using a variety of lenses. Students become more critical and insightful in their approach to human diversity. Students will have the vocabulary, knowledge and skills to articulate well-informed personal responses that show an understanding of alternative worldviews.

### Implementation

**Substantive knowledge:** Content and Concepts: each unit values depth over breadth, readying students for greater levels of complexity and challenge.

**Disciplinary knowledge:** Ways of Knowing: the expertise of using LENSES (hermeneutics: philosophical / psychological / sociological / historical / theological)

**Personal Knowledge:** understanding how personal context shapes our views (culture, family, experience, history, education). Mapping how this evolves and changes as knowledge, understanding and skills increase.

## Our Curriculum Story...

### Year 7

In the beginning... our students are given the key disciplinary tools a practitioner needs to begin their journey towards achieving our ambitious curriculum aim. The 'Stories and Symbols' scheme introduces students to the three fundamental 'ways of knowing' or 'lenses' needed to begin to understand the complexity of religious and non-religious worldviews. Students will apply 'Literal' (historical/scientific), 'Symbolic' (Philosophical) and 'Personal' (beliefs, culture, morals...) Lenses. This scheme uses substantive knowledge from worldviews that students are unlikely to have encountered (e.g. New Age / Shinto / Norse / Ancient Chinese / Ancient Greek / Ancient Folk Traditions) in order to apply and develop these key disciplinary skills.

These key 'ways of knowing' ready the students to dive deeper into the complex world of specific worldviews on our locally agreed syllabus. We start with Sikhism as it is a religion that students in York wouldn't have studied at Key Stage 2. Using our lenses, students explore the diverse beliefs, narratives, expressions and lives of Sikhs in Britain. Our disciplined enquiry, and the subsequent multiplicity of responses, raises the question as to what a religion actually is. Therefore, our next scheme explores Ninian Smart's multi-dimensional exploration of what a religious tradition is.

### Year 8

Students are now ready to stretch their skills set into higher level academic enquiry. Students, armed with Smart's ideas and 'the lenses', investigate Buddhism, asking whether or not it is in fact a religion. Depth of understanding increases as students now explore the complexity of religious identity as the result of cultural, familial and personal context. Students will investigate 'What it means to be a Muslim?' asking 'who gets to decide?' This will allow students to evaluate the different lenses, exploring which 'ways of knowing' and 'sources of authority' have more influence and legitimacy. Ultimately, this scheme will challenge overly simplistic conceptions of religious identity.

The next unit allows students to apply a more nuanced and complex view of religious belief and expression as they evaluate the key question: Who decides what is good? Contrasting Christian principles and other world views will be applied in order to evaluate important ethical dilemmas in contemporary Britain (gender, sex, crime, animal rights, euthanasia, abortion, designer babies, freedom of speech, etc). This unit stretches the students' substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge, interleaving beliefs and practices from Christianity and all the religions they have studied so far, whilst also developing and tracking their own personal knowledge and views of these key moral issues.

### Year 9

Students are now ready to delve into the foundational assumptions of theistic and atheistic worldviews as they explore the Christian arguments for and against the existence of God. Students will sharpen their critical skills and their application of lenses as they grapple with one of philosophy's oldest questions. The level of scholarship, terminology and conceptual-challenge increases in this unit, exploring ideas and terms investigated at A-level.

Students now have the theoretical grounding and expertise to begin to explore one of humanity's most troubling and complex events: The Holocaust. They read Elie Wiesel's book 'Night', evaluating the questions it raises about the nature of God and humanity.

The culmination of Year 9 is to dive as deep as possible into the very idea of a 'worldview' as we ask the question: What is real? Using the film 'The Matrix' (and its many philosophical references - Plato, Baudrillard, Nozick, etc.) students critically assess the nature of reality: Are we prisoners of our own sense experience? Are we living in a simulation? Are we determined by our biology? Or are we free? Are we capable of moral goodness? In short: to what extent are we living in a matrix? Students will combine their awareness of substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and personal knowledge to evaluate this fundamental worldviews question.

## Year 10

Students are now ready to ask (and possibly answer!) the ultimate worldviews questions: What is the meaning of life? How can we live a good life? Armed with a wealth of substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and personal knowledge our students explore various worldviews and sources of wisdom on what it means to lead a good life. Firstly, they will evaluate and apply the worldviews of various philosophical schools, including Socrates, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Cynicism, Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel De Montaigne. They will also evaluate and reflect upon theological influences from scholars such as Augustine, Boethius and Kierkegaard.

Next, students read extracts from the philosophically challenging testimony of Viktor Frankl 'Man's Search For Meaning', as they increase their knowledge and understanding of The Holocaust with greater levels of complexity. They begin exploring psychological, theological and philosophical contributions to the question 'How do we live a good life?' focussing on apathy, nihilism, purpose, freedom and control.

Students will then analyse a film, which focusses on questions like 'What does it mean to be human?' 'Is there anything worth living for?' and 'How important is freedom in helping us live good lives?' Now students should be prepared to investigate synopsis questions asking 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' 'What is the purpose of art?' and 'What is love?'.

Finally, students are ready to tackle the 'ultimate assessment' - a well-considered, complex and informed response to the question "How do we live a good life?" This will be an extended A-Level style essay, which shows off their substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and personal knowledge. It will allow them to 'graduate' as a philosopher, receiving commendation, certification and recognition for their efforts and evaluated wisdom. Their personal lens will now be developed to a far more advanced level, utilising all of the lenses, wisdom and knowledge embraced on their journey thus far.

## Year 7

### **1. Stories and Symbols: Ways of Knowing**

The Literal Lens (historical/scientific)

The Symbolic Lens (Philosophical/Psychological)

The Personal Lens (impact on my beliefs, morals, culture...)

2. **What does it mean to be Sikhi?** Using our lenses to explore the diverse beliefs, expressions and lives of Sikhis in Britain?
3. **What is a religion?** Ninian Smart
4. **Is Buddhism a religion?**

## Year 8

1. **Is Buddhism a religion?**
1. **Are religious labels helpful? What does it mean to be a Muslim? Who gets to decide?**
2. **Christianity and Ethics - Who decides what is good? Does religion help people to be good?** (Ethics in contemporary Britain: gender, sex, race, violence, crime, animal rights, euthanasia, abortion, designer babies, freedom of speech, etc)

## Year 9

1. **Does God exist? Using Christian theological and philosophical lenses to develop understanding of God and evil.**
2. **'Night' by Elie Wiesel: What questions does the Holocaust raise about God and humanity?**
3. **What is real?**

N.B. Within these schemes at both KS3 and KS4 time will be devoted to the question 'How can we express the spiritual through music and art?'

## Year 10

The Local Agreed Syllabus recommends that all schools follow a GCSE at KS4. We offer GCSE Religious Studies; Christianity and Buddhism, but it is not compulsory to all students. We have two large classes at GCSE in both Year 11 and Year 10 this year. In 2021 the department has set out to renew the provision at KS4 which acknowledges the insistence that Christianity plays a major role whilst embracing the other major religions and world views. Important ethical themes must be addressed, looking through religious, historical and philosophical lenses. The material covered and the questions asked become increasingly complex.

1. **How do we live a good life? Part 1: Philosophers (17)**
2. **Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl – how do we live a good life in hell on earth? (5)**
3. **Film – What does this film tell us about living a good life? (3-6)**

Equilibrium – What does it mean to be human? Is there anything worth living for?

**OR**

Minority Report – How important is freedom in helping us live good lives?

**4. Synopsis Questions – What is love, beauty and meaning? (6)**

**5. The Ultimate Assessment – graduation of the philosopher – how do we live a good life? (3)**

**Year 11 (12 lessons during PSHE starting 2021 – RFE lead):**

There is no allocated weekly slot for RPE in Year 11. The team has produced 12 lessons to fit into the PHSCE curriculum. These lessons were designed to be engaging, current and thoroughly planned and resourced, allowing non-specialists to deliver them in a meaningful way. They follow on from our RPE Y10 CORE curriculum, as students learn to identify 'Logical Fallacies' in order to evaluate world-views and rhetorical arguments. In terms of PSHE, the ability to think critically is fundamental to staying safe and confident in the world of so many conflicting worldviews and voices – including extremist ideologies. Students apply their knowledge of Logical Fallacies to the worlds of politics, religion and social media.

Now, students are well-equipped to use their critical skills to evaluate the complex real-world ethical debates around 'equality'. Ultimately they will be analysing whether equality is the same as equity, and how this translates into modern day dilemma concerning 'positive discrimination', 'conversion therapy', trans rights in the prison system', etc.

- **Radicalisation and Extremism**

1. Introduction to extremism
2. What are Logical Fallacies?
3. Logical fallacies in Politics
4. Logical fallacies in Religion
5. Logical fallacies in Social Media
6. K & U Assessment

- **Equality: Prejudice and Discrimination?**

1. Is equality about treating everyone the same?
2. Is positive discrimination an oxymoron?
3. Is banning conversion therapy religious discrimination?
4. Is putting transgender women in male prisons transphobic?
5. Is the abortion law discriminatory against disabled people?
6. Is farming and eating animals' speciesism?